

## THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE

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Six months, 75 cents. No subscription for a less period received.

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

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## GEN. SLOCUM'S MISTAKE.

It is to be greatly regretted that Gen. H. W. Slocum has seen fit to express his views contained in a recent interview.

"I only allowed my name to be used as a candidate," he is reported as saying, "to demonstrate whether the G.A.R. was or was not a Republican organization. My defeat shows that it is."

Both premise and conclusion in this are certainly remarkable. It is even more remarkable to have a defeated candidate publicly assert that simply because he has not been honored with the highest office in any association that the association has therefore failed in the object for which it was founded.

A moment's consideration will show how groundless Gen. Slocum's conclusions are. He has no more right to assume that he was defeated because he was a Democrat than have Gen. Grier, Gen. Anthony and Maj. Warner to claim that they were defeated because they were Republicans. Two things fatally injured Gen. Slocum's candidacy: 1. That he is an active politician; and, 2. That he has not been noted as a G.A.R. man prior to his candidacy for Commander-in-Chief.

The same causes operated with equal force against other candidates. Maj. Warner had more supporters in the Encampment than Gen. Slocum, and besides was in the direct line of promotion, having been an active G.A.R. man ever since the Order was formed, and having filled all the offices in the Order under Commander-in-Chief. Yet his being an active Republican politician and a Member of Congress, was thought to make it unsafe to elect him Commander-in-Chief at this particular time. Maj. Warner himself was one of the first to adopt this view, and he withdrew himself from the contest, in a speech of singular grace and lofty comradeship. If anybody in the Encampment has the right to complain of being injured by politics it is Maj. Warner.

Gen. Grier's candidacy was unsuccessful for one of the reasons that proved fatal to Gen. Slocum's—lack of prominence as a G.A.R. man prior to his candidacy. Gen. Grier was a superb soldier, is not a politician, and stands very high in St. Louis. But he has only been a member of the Order a couple of years, and had never held any position prior to his acceptance of the Chairmanship of the Local Executive Committee—a position which he filled to the entire satisfaction of every one.

The selection finally fell on Maj. Rea, because: 1. He was in the line of promotion, having filled the office of Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief.

2. As a Judge elected by a non-partisan vote, he is virtually out of politics; and 3. He is a safe, conservative man, who will keep the Order close to the principles which have heretofore controlled it.

These are facts which Gen. Slocum is quite as well aware of as any other comrade, and it is idle for him to talk otherwise.

## "DEADBEATS."

By what rule of logic can anybody justify the assertion so frequently made by soldier-hating papers that it is "the deadbeats who are clearing for pensions?"

The entire Grand Army of the Republic is a unit in favor of a further liberalization of the pension laws. There is but one voice in the Order, and that is that the present pension laws are grossly insufficient, and common justice and common decency demand that the Nation shall do much better for its defenders than it yet has done. The only difference of opinion among the nearly 400,000 members of the organization is as to the shape that the further liberalization shall take.

No one can say, with the least regard for the truth, that the G.A.R. does not fairly represent the men who actually did the great work of putting down the rebellion. If only deadbeats clamor for pensions, then the entire G.A.R. is a collection of deadbeats.

It is impossible to deny that the great bulk of the survivors of the real fighting soldiers are in the G.A.R. It is true that some who helped bear the heat and burden are still outside, but they are comparatively few, and they are coming in with the greatest rapidity. Anyone can satisfy himself of the truth of this by looking around among the soldiers of his acquaintance. He will find the bronze badge on nearly all of them, and the rest getting into a frame of mind to put it on.

Somebody did an awful sight of hard fighting during the war; somebody did a terrible lot of marching, digging and hardship enduring in order to put down the rebellion. Unless, therefore, a man is ready to charge that all the fighting soldiers were killed during the war, or died within a few years after its close, while the shirks and deadbeats lived on and flourished, he must admit that the G.A.R. is made up of men who fought the battles of the Nation, and saved it, and that its voice is the voice of those to whom the country owes everything.

"As an old soldier I thank you for the veto," a man who had seen service said, as he shook the President's hand and passed on.—Report of the President's reception at St. Louis.

This was probably the same professional "old soldier" who has been doing the grand act at the Reunions in Southern Illinois of flinging his G.A.R. badge on the platform and renouncing all connection with the Order. Wonder how much they are paying him?

THE St. Louis Encampment brought to gether more famous figures of the war than had been assembled for many years before, but the stalwart form of the *Casus de Lion* of the volunteers was missing. There was not one Logan, and his place is vacant forever.

## WAS GETTYSBURG A "DECISIVE BATTLE?"

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: Allow me to ask what you consider a decisive battle? I have always thought that they were of such character as to leave no doubt to the contestants on either side which won the victory, and the reader of history had no trouble to decide between a drawn battle and a decisive one. Among a few prominent ones I will name Cannae, Marston, Austerlitz, Wagram, Leipzig, Waterloo, Sedawa and Sedan, in all of which one side drove the other in confusion from the field. Was that the case at Gettysburg? Did not Gen. Lee retire at his own leisure from the field? or did Gen. Meade make any efforts to drive him off under the regime of Pickens' charge. Not wishing to attract too much of the public gaze, I will modestly assume the old character of which we are all very proud.—VOLUNTEER, Dorsey, Howard Co., Md.

Our correspondent puts too narrow a construction on the term "decisive battle." Battles are very frequently decided by the use of the virtual destruction of one of the opposing armies. They are decisive also in a political or moral way, without reference to the purely military results. For example, the battle of Bunker Hill was in a sense "decisive," because it demonstrated that the Americans were ready to fight pitched battles for their liberties, and that they could hold their own in the open field with the boasted "British regulars."

The battle of Gettysburg was in some respects decisive, and in some not. It was not decisive according to our correspondent's standard, for Lee's army was allowed to retire unmolested from the field, which would give the impression that our own army was hurt too badly to follow it up. But it was decisive in that every maneuver of the rebels was totally defeated; that they were compelled to abandon their plan of campaign and retreat without having gained a single one of the advantages for which they crossed the Potomac, and that it took off the edge of their offensiveness and showed them that their only hope was in standing strictly on the defensive and waiting for us to weary ourselves out in attacking them. It was decisive in a negative moral and political sense, rather than in a strictly military one. If the rebels had succeeded in driving us from the field, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington would have been at their mercy, the North would have been discouraged at not being able to put any army in the field which could successfully withstand Lee's army, the recognition of the so-called Southern Confederacy would have followed almost without doubt. Inasmuch as they did not succeed in this, it was a very "decisive" battle for them.

There has been much dispute as to whether Gen. Meade should not have followed Pickens' repulse with a return blow which would have destroyed Lee's army, and the general opinion now is that in his failure to do so he missed one of the very greatest opportunities that ever came to any man.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS. Why should any veteran, or anyone who assumes to be a friend of the veteran, oppose the recommendations of the G.A.R. National Pension Committee? There is not a single thing recommended there but what every man admits the soldiers should have.

All the falsehoods which a few flatulent, so-called characterless fellows can put about about the "G.A.R. House of Lords," "pension sharks," "the Pension Committee Junta," etc., cannot change the fact that the recommendations embrace the things for which there is at present the most crying need, and which promise the speediest and surest relief to those who are in most need of relief.

Certain things which everyone must acknowledge will do so much good—which no one can say will do any harm—cannot be the work of selfish and designing men.

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## THE AMENDMENTS.

The following are the amendments to the Rules and Regulations of the Grand Army of the Republic adopted at the 21st National Encampment at St. Louis, 1887:

I. Amending Chapter V, Article I, Section 2, by adding at the close of the section, "Provided that any comrades who have been refused a charter for a Post by a Department Commander, may appeal to the Commander-in-Chief, and he, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Administration, is empowered to order the Department Commander to issue the charter." II. Incorporating the flag ribbon of the membership badge as part of the official badge. Add in Section 2, Article IX, Chapter V, Rules and Regulations, after "1873" in the fourth line, the words "as amended by the National Encampment at St. Louis, Mo., Sept. 30, 1887."

In the description of official badges, page 34, Rules and Regulations, strike out the word "plain" in the second line of the second paragraph. In the third paragraph, strike out the words "the ribbon be one and one-half inches in length in the clear, and one and one-half inches in width, to be composed of the flag, as on the membership badge, with a border of one-quarter of an inch on each side, the border to be in color for the National officers, buff for Department officers, cherry red, and for Post officers, light blue." Strike out on page 35, "The flag ribbon of the membership badge is not to be used on official badges."

The following general resolutions were adopted:

I. That the Post composed of members who served in the naval or marine service of the United States may use the term "albatross" instead of "comrade," when they deem the same appropriate. II. The term "service" in Section 5,